

Climate Bill Will Devastate American Families and Jobs

Senator Jim Inhofe, 12.10.2007

This article by Senator Inhofe was originally featured in [Human Events](#).

For the first time in history, a fatally flawed global-warming cap-and-trade bill passed out of the United States Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee. Democrats, led by Chairman Barbara Boxer (D.-Calif.), approved the Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act of 2007 (S 2191) by a vote of 11 to 8 on December 5.

Serious Flaws

While the outcome of the vote in committee was never in question -- since Democrats hold the majority -- it did provide Republicans the opportunity to expose many of the serious flaws of this bill. The fact is this bill is simply all economic pain for no climate gain: Numerous analyses have placed the costs at trillions of dollars. Even if one accepts the dire claims of man-made global warming, this bill will not have a measurable impact on the climate.

First, this bill will force energy prices even higher. Supporters of this bill are going to be asking the American people to pay even more for energy at the pump and in their homes at a time when energy prices are already on the rise. If this bill passes, electricity prices are estimated to skyrocket 35% to 65% within just seven years, forcing a huge economic hit on American households. Additionally, the poor will be the hit the hardest as they pay about five times more per month, as a percentage of their monthly expenditures, compared to wealthier Americans. The consequences of higher fuel bills for poor Americans can be devastating. High energy bills were cited as one of the two main reasons for homelessness, according to a 2006 survey of Colorado homeless families with children.

Further, the Lieberman-Warner bill would mean the loss of millions of American jobs. The respected consulting firm Charles River Associates International testified before the EPW Committee last month that by 2020 this bill will cause a net loss of between 1.5 and 3.4 million jobs. I am particularly concerned about the impact of this bill on our domestic automobile industry, which has endured significant job cuts over the last few years. The economies of several Midwestern states -- including Missouri, Ohio and Michigan, to name a few—are directly tied to the prosperity of this industry. To help protect American jobs, I introduced an amendment that would have required the secretary of Commerce, a year after the bill becomes law and every year thereafter, to report on whether this bill will cut 10,000 jobs in the automobile industry during the following calendar year. In other words, it would give us the ability to look ahead and see how people would be impacted. Democrats, however, killed the amendment.

Recent analysis from the Energy Information Administration (EIA) of a less stringent cap-and-trade bill shows energy costs for consumers and employers will be even more expensive -- and burdens on hardworking Americans, the elderly and the poor will be

even more severe -- if Congress adopts carbon mandates but fails to enact policies to increase domestic energy supplies. Therefore, clean technologies must be pursued and available if we are going to impose emissions limits.

Yet Democrats failed to even mention the word "nuclear" in drafting their bill. Any credible attempt to drastically reduce carbon emissions must include nuclear energy. You simply cannot ignore the world's largest source of emission-free energy if you plan to cut carbon emissions and still keep the lights on. Recent EIA analysis of the less-stringent bill included a "No Nuclear" scenario that showed that carbon emissions actually increase by 3%.

Natural gas must also be part of this energy mix. Demand for natural gas is outstripping supply, and the bill makes it worse. December 2007 natural gas futures are already priced 23.75% above today's level, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is forecasting electricity prices to rise across the country from 19% to as high as 32% because of high natural-gas prices. The adoption of carbon caps in the near-term will exacerbate this problem greatly by causing fuel shifting from coal -- currently about half of U.S. electric generating capacity -- to natural gas resources.

Democrats were able to sidestep these major issues in committee. That will not happen on the Senate floor, where I promise an enormous fight awaits next year. Because this bill will strike a devastating blow to American families, American jobs and the American way of life, I vow to lead the charge in the Senate against this bill and work closely with my Senate colleagues to ensure this bill never becomes law.